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PAGE 01 STATE 024996

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. PANAMA: TREATY PROSPECTS AND TORRIJOS' FUTURE

EMBASSY PANAMA ANALYZES TORRIJOS' EXPULSION OF 11 OPPOSITION LEADERS, THE RESULTANT BITTER FEUD BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PANAMANIAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. THE EMBASSY THINKS THAT THE NATURAL DYNAMICS OF PANAMANIAN POLITICS WILL NUDGE TORRIJOS LEFTWARD AS HIS SUPPORT DWINDLES AND HE IS FORCED TO TURN TO LEFTIST GROUPS FOR SUPPORT. IN THIS CONTEXT:

--IF THE CANAL ISSUE REMAINS UNRESOLVED, ANY SUCCESSOR

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 024996

GOVERNMENT WILL CERTAINLY BE MORE NATIONALISTIC.

--MODERATES CLAIM THAT A TREATY APPROVED BY TORRIJOS WILL FORCE HIM TO BEAR THE BURDEN OF RATIFICATION, AFTER WHICH THEY COULD PUSH FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORMS OR EVEN OVERTHROW TORRIJOS. (THEY ARE CONFIDENT THAT A MODERATE SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT COULD SUPPORT AN ALREADY COMPLETED TREATY FOR WHICH IT NEVER COULD HAVE SECURED RATIFICATION.)

--ANY DELAY IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL MOVE TORRIJOS TO DENOUNCE THE US AND STRENGTHEN HIS TIES WITH LEFTISTS.

EMBASSY COMMENT: AS TIME PASSES AND THE PANAMANIAN'S PERCEIVED SENSE OF INJUSTICE INCREASES, OUR ABILITY TO OBTAIN FAVORABLE TREATY TERMS DIMINISHES. FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE NEGOTIATION OF A TREATY WITH THE TORRIJOS GOVERNMENT WHILE IT HAS SUFFICIENTLY BROAD SUPPORT TO ACCEPT AND DEFEND ACCOMMODATION WITH THE US WILL DELAY THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A TREATY FOR SEVERAL YEARS. (CONFIDENTIAL) PANAMA 750, 1/2.)

2. UNITED NATIONS: THORN ON THE SIDE OF WESTERN UNITY

PRIME MINISTER THORN, REVIEWING HIS YEAR AS UNGA PRESIDENT, HAS TOLD EMBASSY LUXEMBOURG THAT THE US AND WEST HAVE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES TO INFLUENCE UN VOTES. THORN NOTED THAT:

--HE FULLY SUPPORTED AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN'S STIFF RESISTANCE TO THIRD WORLD RHETORICAL EXCESSES, BUT THE TIME HAS COME TO PUT THE CARROT BEFORE THE STICK.

--WESTERN INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES SHOULD CONSULT TWO TO THREE WEEKS PRIOR TO IMPORTANT VOTES.

--OTHER DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES SHOULD TAKE THE LEAD IN EXERTING INFLUENCE IN ORDER TO AVOID APPEARING PART OF A US-CONTROLLED BLOC.

AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN AGREES WITH THORN'S ANALYSIS AND:

--PROPOSES THORN BE INVITED TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE FOR
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 024996

BETTER WESTERN COORDINATION;

--NOTES THAT WESTERN NATIONS EXERT VERY LITTLE PRESSURE TO COUNTERACT ANTI-AMERICAN VOTING, EVEN ON NATO ISSUES.

AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: IF THE EUROPEANS WILL NOT DEFEND US WITH VOTES ON A STRAIGHT OUT NATO ISSUE, THEIR DEFENSE MIN-

ISTERS SHOULD BE TOLD WE ARE NOT SURE WE SHOULD DEFEND THEM WITH GUNS ON THE NORTH GERMAN PLAIN. (CONFIDENTIAL) LUXEMBOURG 109, 1/29.)

3. SAUDIS COUNTER SOVIETS IN YEMEN'S BID FOR ARMS

EMBASSY SANA REPORTS THAT THE YAR HAS RECEIVED THE EXPECTED SOVIET ARMS SHIPMENT AT A TIME WHEN THE SAUDIS ARE FINALLY

ABOUT TO GIVE THE YEMENIS DETAILED PLANS FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE. THE SOVIET SHIPMENT:

--INCLUDES MIG-21'S AND PROBABLY T-54/55 TANKS;

--WILL NOT REPRESENT A REAL THREAT TO THE SAUDIS FOR AT LEAST A YEAR BECAUSE TRAINING TO OPERATE THE MIGS AND OTHER MODERN EQUIPMENT BEGAN ONLY LAST WEEK;

--ARRIVED DESPITE THE FAILURE OF COMMAND COUNCIL CHAIRMAN HAMDI TO FULFILL THE SOVIET DEMAND THAT HE VISIT MOSCOW BEFORE DELIVERY.

THE SAUDI MILITARY MODERNIZATION PLAN SHOWN TO THE EMBASSY COULD AMOUNT TO \$150 MILLION OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD. THE DETAILS HAVE NOT YET BEEN GIVEN TO THE YEMENIS.

EMBASSY COMMENT: THE SAUDIS HOPE TO TAKE THE GAME AWAY FROM THE SOVIETS NOW THAT THEY ARE FINALLY MOVING IN THE ARMS FIELD. COMMON INTERESTS BETWEEN YEMEN AND SAUDI ARABIA DWARF ANYTHING THE SOVIETS COULD CRANK UP. (SECRET) SANA 293, 1/31.)

4. SAHARA: ALGERIANS WANT PEACE, BUT PREPARE FOR WAR SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 024996

AN ALGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL HAS TOLD CHARGE LYNE THAT HIS GOVERNMENT:

--WANTS A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE SAHARA PROBLEM, BUT BELIEVES ARAB ATTEMPTS TO GARNER MOROCCAN CONCESSIONS WILL NOT SUCCEED; AND

--WILL DIRECT THE MAIN THRUST OF THEIR DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TOWARD OBTAINING A US-SPONSORED REFERENDUM.

EMBASSY COMMENT: THERE ARE NO CONCRETE INDICATIONS OF SERIOUS DIPLOMATIC MOVES BY EITHER PARTY TOWARD A RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT. THERE IS EVIDENCE OF A SHARP INCREASE IN THE ALGERIAN MILITARY BUILDUP. WE CAN OBSERVE ONLY THAT THE

ALGERIANS HAVE SUFFERED A DIPLOMATIC DEFEAT IN THE MADRID ACCORD AND NOW A MILITARY DEFEAT AT AMGALA. IT WOULD BE UNCHARACTERISTIC OF THEM TO ACCEPT SUCH EMBARRASMENTS WITHOUT SHARP REACTION OF SOME SORT. (CONFIDENTIAL) ALGIERS 251, 2/1.)

5. PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS LOOK TO ELECTIONS

EMBASSY LISBON EVALUATES THE CURRENT POSITION OF THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS PREPARATORY TO THE APRIL NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. AS A RESULT OF THE ABORTIVE NOVEMBER 25 COUP ATTEMPT, THE COMMUNISTS LOST MOST OF THEIR SUPPORT IN THE MILITARY AND THEIR FIRM HOLD ON THE MEDIA WAS BROKEN. IN THE FACE OF THESE SETBACKS THE PCP IS PURSUING A TWO-TRACK STRATEGY:

--THEY SEEK TO PRESERVE THEIR POSITIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT AND TO MAINTAIN THEIR SUPPORT AMONG THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS.

--THE LEADERSHIP IS REORGANIZING THE PARTY TO STRENGTHEN INTERNAL DISCIPLINE AND PREPARE FOR THE ELECTIONS.

WHILE ADOPTING A PRIMARILY DEFENSIVE POSTURE, THE PCP IS EXPECTED TO MAKE OCCASIONAL SALLIES AGAINST TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY. SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 024996

TUNITY SUCH AS THE GOVERNMENT'S AUSTERITY PROGRAM. THE COMMUNISTS WILL ALSO TRY TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE SOCIALISTS TO INSURE CONTINUED PCP PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT. WHILE THE PCP POSITION IS REASONABLY SECURE FOR THE MOMENT, THEIR ROLE COULD EASILY BECOME A MAJOR ISSUE IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS.

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (CDS) ARE SEEN AS THE PARTY WHICH STANDS TO GAIN THE MOST IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS. THE CDS SHOULD MAKE SUBSTANTIAL ELECTORAL GAINS AND WILL PROBABLY PARTICIPATE IN ANY POST-ELECTION GOVERNMENT. IT IS TYPIFIED BY A YOUNG AND CAPABLE LEADERSHIP AND BY ITS DEFENSE OF THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM. THE RISE OF THE CDS IS AN INDICATION THAT PORTUGAL IS MOVING TOWARD DEVELOPING A POLITICAL SPECTRUM TYPICAL OF A WESTERN EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY. (CONFIDENTIAL) LISBON 644 AND 679, 2/1.) INGERSOLL

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